



The Utah Interpreter

News for Utah's Interpreting Community



News from The Utah Interpreter Program

Mitch Jensen, Program Director

www.aslterps.utah.gov

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Director's Update

Many changes have taken place over the years I have worked as Director of the Utah Interpreter Program, and we have seen progress within the interpreting profession on both the national and local levels. Throughout this process, the function and role of UIP has transformed as well.

It is well known that there is a shortage of qualified interpreters. In turn, much discussion has been directed at how to resolve this issue. One result is that temporary permits have been issued to non-certified individuals in hopes of reducing the deficiency. The original

purpose of temporary permits was to allow practitioners who moved into Utah to work, as well as assist in situations of true hardship, which is often the case in rural areas. UIP began granting permits more freely with the hope it would allow enough time for interpreters to improve their skills and become certified. While the goal was to reduce the interpreter shortage, the situation has only escalated.

Despite good intentions, it has been found that only a small number of permit holders ever become certified. Numbers show that those who are granted a permit on average hold the permit for one to two years. When permits expire, most never become certified and many never even attempt the test. When the permit was revoked, individuals would move on and pursue other occupations, only to force hiring agencies to recruit and often rehire the position with another temporary permit holder. This creates a revolving door and causes the cycle to repeat itself.

In this cycle it is the Deaf community who pays the ultimate price. Deaf students and consumers are provided inadequate services by individuals who have not demonstrated

entry-level standards through an established system such as state or national certification. This creates a false impression that effective communication is taking place and that the shortage is being met. Issuing temporary permits did not bring the necessary attention to the underlying problem.

Issuing permits also keeps wages down, particularly in education. It gives the appearance that needs are being met. It does not force administration to become more competitive and recruit qualified interpreters who are compensated appropriately for their professional and educational credentials, nor does it provide additional incentive for interpreters to advance and also assist in reducing the rate of attrition.

The issue was brought before the Utah Certification Board. After several public meetings the Board voted on May 3, 2006 to eliminate temporary permits. In the discussions that occurred I was reminded that it is not UIP's role to reduce the shortage of interpreters but to ensure that the quality of standards set forth are met within certification testing and requirements. The decision by the Board to eliminate

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temporary permits was given support by the USOR Executive Director, the DSDHH Director, and UIP. The matter was then brought to the State Board of Education for final approval. Both sides of the issue were presented, and the Board of Education agreed that action needs to take place.

The Board of Education determined that instead of removing temporary permits abruptly, they should be phased out over a period of up to three years. They also ordered that a study committee be established to further examine the issue and make recommendations. UIP is pleased with this decision because it will hopefully be the catalyst for change and promote quality services. It will include the necessary stakeholders and decision makers who can bring about such change.

While temporary permits continue to be granted, permit holders will be required to strictly adhere to the policies and procedures for permits.

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It takes time to succeed
because success is
merely the natural
reward of taking time
to do anything well.
~ Joseph Ross

Professional Development

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JUST DO IT

Interpreters in Utah have various resources for professional development, but did you know there are opportunities outside the state as well? One valuable resource is the Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Training (DO IT) Center.

The DO IT Center, in partnership with the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, was selected to serve, train, maintain and increase interpreter competencies in areas under the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Mid-America Regional Interpreter Education Center. The center serves 11 states including Utah,



Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wyoming, New Mexico, Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. Through distance education they provide numerous training opportunities to sign language interpreters. Because Utah is one of the states served by the grant, we can take full advantage of the programs offered by the DO IT Center.

One beneficial program is the Lending Library. This resource has been established for working and aspiring interpreters who live in the RSA Mid-America Region, and wish to improve their interpreting and/or communication skills. The library offers a wealth of choice

materials to interpreters at no charge. The only cost you incur is the return postage insured with delivery confirmation. You can borrow up to four (4) items at one time for a period of thirty (30) days. A seven (7) day extension may be granted upon request.

There are over 500 items by way of books, videotapes, DVDs, and CDs that are available for loan! Here are some examples of materials you can have access to: NIC preparation DVDs, the education series with actual classroom environments, receptive fingerspelling practice, and an array of ASL stimulus.

UTAH interpreters have various resources for professional development, but did you know there are opportunities outside the state as well?

To access the library, go to <http://www.unco.edu/DOIT/> then select "Lending Library." Upon entering the site, a full list of all library resources is available by clicking on Library.com. Once in the site you can search for topics and titles you are looking for and add all interested materials in a briefcase for check-out. All materials are conveniently mailed directly to you. To utilize the lending library services follow all instructions and guidelines set forth by the DO IT Center. For additional information go to <http://www.unco.edu/DOIT/> or contact Dora Veith at dora.veith@unco.edu.

Some information in this article has been provided by the DO IT Center.

UIP Spotlight

Submitted by Bonnie Bass

UIP recognizes one interpreter each newsletter who is newly certified, has advanced their certification, or has achieved something that makes us step back and just say, "WOW!"



This issue's spotlight focuses on **Trenton Marsh**, the first Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) recognized in the State of Utah. Trenton passed the RID CDI test in March 2006. Congratulations, Trenton!

Trenton grew up in Fremont, California, and attended the California School for the Deaf. His immediate family members are Deaf, and almost all of his extended family, Deaf or otherwise, use ASL. He also attended the National Technical Institute of the Deaf (NTID) for several years. Currently, Trenton is the ICAN Coordinator for the Utah Interpreter Program, helping to mentor interpreters.

In addition to his ICAN responsibilities, Trenton also owns his own business, Marsh MetalWorks, where he focuses on welding and metalworking for both practical and artistic purposes. His real passion, however, is skiing -- moguls, backcountry, downhill, you name it! In fact, Trenton is hoping to be the ski technician for the US Deaf Ski Team during the 2007 Deaflympics which will be held here in Utah. He enjoys the outdoors -- everything from backpacking, rafting, rock climbing, to mountain biking!

Trenton is hoping to be able to train more CDIs in Utah and help them to become certified. He also would like to hold workshops for hearing interpreters and CDIs to learn how to work together. Keep your eye out for these, for they promise to be fun and informative!

The ICAN Program

Interpreter Certification
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I want to share with you information about an exciting new program at UIP! In response to concerns regarding interpreter recruiting, training and certification, the Public Service Commission recently awarded three grants. UIP was one of the three organizations selected to address these concerns.

The Interpreter Certification Advancement Network (ICAN) was conceived and formed by UIP to address a specific niche in Utah interpreting: Novice Level interpreters or EIPA certified interpreters, and how they can attain Intermediate Level certification. UIP recognizes that this has been an issue on two levels: some Novice Level interpreters stay at that level for longer than the law currently allows, or they lose their certification and therefore leave the profession. Neither benefits anyone, least of all the consumers.

This one-year pilot program begins with 15 Novice interpreters and three deaf

Beginning June, 2006, UIP will offer the Written Exam portion of the Utah Interpreter Certification test every Friday, in addition to the weekend of regularly scheduled testing. Sign up for the exam by turning in the UIP testing application and payment at least three (3) weeks in advance of your testing day. Make a note on the application to indicate your testing date, and you will be contacted by UIP to schedule a testing time.

language mentors. These mentors will assist with strengthening foundations in ASL in their mentees through weekly one-on-one sessions throughout the year. Approximately halfway through the year, interpreter mentors will be brought in to work on polishing the participants' interpreting skills. Workshops given by various presenters will also be provided throughout the year, as well as several mini-workshops and immersion activities.

ICAN also provides scholarship assistance to Utah interpreters so they can take a distance mentoring program through the DO IT Center in Colorado. The Distance Opportunity Interpreter Training Center was formed specifically to address the needs of interpreters who may not have access to regular mentoring or training opportunities such as those in rural areas or those who are very busy. ICAN screens applicants according to the DO IT Center's criteria and selects 6 interpreters to sponsor. The rest of the program will be facilitated by the DO IT Center staff.

Please join me in welcoming our initial 15 in-house mentees, and our six (6) DO IT Center scholarship recipients to this pilot program, and please consider our program when we announce the second year openings!

UIP Interpreter Lab

UIP Interpreter Lab

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So, there you are, reading the mail for the day and you see the envelope from Utah Interpreter Program. Before you even open it, you realize that it's your certification maintenance that is due and you haven't gone to all the workshops that you wanted to. Eeek! Let's turn back the clock and see what another scenario could have been.

Have you heard of the Workshops on CD program? In the UIP Interpreting Lab, there are several CD workshops available for checkout. They are formatted similar to an on-site workshop in that you will see the presenter signing, see their over-head slides, and have opportunities to practice what you are learning. At the conclusion of the workshop, a quiz to test your knowledge of the topic presented is included.



The workshops vary in subject matter and length of time. Topics include ASL grammar, classifiers, voicing skills, idioms, register, cognitive processing, gender differences, interpreting sensitive language, second language proficiency, and more. The length of workshop varies from 3 hours to 20 hours.

Interpreters who have used the Workshops on CD have commented on their convenience. The checkout period is three (3)

weeks and you can watch it over that period at whatever time is most convenient for you. Perhaps you live in a rural part of Utah and have a difficult time getting to on-site workshops. The CDs can be mailed to you for your convenience.

There is a \$100 deposit required to check out a CD which will be returned to you if you return the CD on time and undamaged. If you are watching the CD just for skill development, there is no other fee. If you want to earn Utah Continuing Education Hours or RID Continuing Education Units, there is a fee of \$4.95 per workshop hour that must be mailed to the manufacturing company in Maryland along with your workshop quiz in order to earn the CEHs/CEUs. If the latter is your goal, make sure you plan enough time before your maintenance is due for the company to process your CEH/CEU paperwork. They typically indicate it requires 4-6 weeks.

To see all the information about the Workshop on CD lending program, look at the website www.aslterps.utah.gov/development.php?pid=7421242.

So, there you are, reading the mail for the day and you see the envelope from Utah Interpreter Program. Before you even open it, you realize that it's your certification maintenance that is due. With a sigh of relief, you realize, with the help of the Workshops on CD, you have earned all the CEHs you needed for this maintenance cycle and you are good to go!

On a final note, an interpreter mentor will now be available in the lab on Thursday nights, along with the regular language mentor!

Remember, **lab hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 2pm-9pm**. An interpreter mentor is available Tuesday 2-5pm, Wednesday 2-5pm, and Thursday 2-9pm. A language mentor is available Tuesday 5-9pm, Wednesday 5-9pm, and Thursday 5-9pm. See you in the lab!

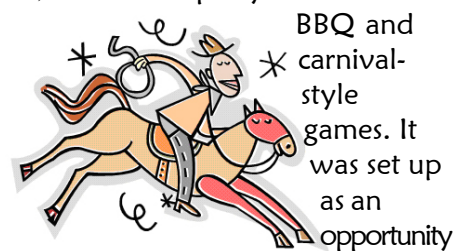
Cowboy Philosophy

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Terplympics 2006:
Fun Times Were Had By All!

I want to take a moment to thank all of the fine folks who helped to put on the interpreter party, the "Terplympics," on Saturday, May 13, 2006. The party consisted of a



for interpreters from all walks of life to get together and enjoy the summer weather, catch up, and eat pie! (Speaking of eating pie, Carrie Taylor won the women's pie-eating contest! Go Carrie!)

The games were a blast! Jenn Storrer ran the softball-throwing game (at which John Peeber rocked!). Courtney Ruff ran the challenging ring toss (most people couldn't get one ring on the bottles, but Bonnie Bass landed 3 of 6 her first try!). Barry Utley was in charge of the putting contest (Ann Hicken sunk 2 out of 3!). Clay Anderson held a football-throwing contest, where the competitor had to throw a ball through an old tire (Deana Lunt

looked like Peyton Manning, sending her first throw dead center through the tire!).

The highlight of the day was the performance by the Beachley Family, who rocked out on the karaoke machine! Go ladies! There was serious competition with Suzanne Warner and Travis Cook, however, who busted out "I Got Friends in Low Places."

The party wrapped up with a raffle (where people could swap their gifts) led by Russel "Sprouts" McKell and, of course, the infamous pie-eating contest! You don't know what fun is until you see Jeff Born, Wing Butler, Barry Utley, and John Peebler put away some pie! They were no match, however, for the men's winner, Marty Rathbun, who is a guy who can eat! He has already predicted a victory for next year, as well. We need all of you interpreters to come out and put him up to the challenge! The women's pie-eating contest was just as exciting! Okay, not really, since 6 of the contestants just licked the whip cream from the top, so they wouldn't dirty their faces. I had my money on Angie Beachley, but maybe next year! Jes Julander sure enjoyed herself, though, when after the contest she chased Anita Nelson down and smeared chocolate cream pie in her face!

I hope all of you interpreters will plan on coming out to the Terplympics next year! The party will continue during May 2007, and it will be just as rocking!

If you see any of the following people, make sure you tell them they're "da bomb" for all the work they did: Dawn Duran, Suzanne Warner, Jenn Storrer, Russ McKell, Barry Utley, and Courtney Ruff. A very special thanks goes out to Justin Warner, who ran the BBQ!

Thanks, and see you all next year!

Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other. ~ Abraham Lincoln

The UIP Program Assistant Team

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UIP is happy to report that our new internet accessible database is working great! Many of you have already contacted us to set up your authorization code. If you haven't done so, we encourage you to send us your code by email.

Remember -- all interpreters who have attended workshops (and signed attendance records which have been submitted to UIP) can view their own workshop attendance history, including CEHs earned for the year or maintenance cycle (three years), on our web site.

Contact us to initially set up your authorization code. You can then access your information by logging in on the Interpreter Directory page of the UIP web site (or "Interpreter Login" on the home page), selecting your name and entering your authorization code (this link takes you directly to the login page:

http://www.aslterps.utah.gov/UIP/terp_dir.php). Access to



personal file data, including address, contact numbers, e-mail, certification and renewal information will now be available. Please check your personal data for accuracy, and advise us of any changes by sending UIP an email through this same screen, via the embedded email window.

UIP always welcomes your suggestions (send them to UIPComments@utah.gov). If you experience any problems accessing our web site, please contact our office.

Skill Building 101

To improve our work, [interpreters] diligently strive to enhance skills and techniques thus far acquired. In addition, seek out proficiencies yet to be acquired and incorporate them into your interpretation. Take inspiration from even your smallest increments of skill advancement....

42. How does an interpreter improve his or her receptive skills, the ability to understand a signer's message?

First, identify areas of greatest concern to you. Do you have more problems with fingerspelling, pronouns, or number in ASL? Do you have problems with specialized vocabulary or with transitions between topics? Once you've established a list, prioritize your challenges and look for resources to improve your skills. Locate a fingerspelling skill-building videotape. Find another videotape, and look only for pronouns or transitions between topics. Watch live signers, and look for the skill you want to improve the most.

Excerpted from "Great Interpreters Don't Grow on Trees," by Kelley C. Clark, MSW; p. 39; The Ovid Bell Press, Fulton MS, 2004, with permission.